

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Water Resources Division
Water Rights Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact

Part I. Proposed Action Description

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* City of Kalispell
Public Works Department
PO Box 1997
Kalispell, MT 59903
2. *Type of action:* Appropriate for Change of Appropriation Water Right 76LJ 30049640
3. *Water source name:* Groundwater
4. *Location affected by project:* NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SWW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 18, Township 29N, Range 21W, Flathead County
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*

The Applicant is requesting to add a point of diversion and change the place of use for Water Right Claim Nos. 76LJ 45076-00, and 76LJ 45077-00, and Beneficial Water Use Permits Nos. 76LJ 4601-00, 76LJ 10756-00, 76LJ 23590-00, 76LJ 97205-00, 76LJ 30008765, 76LJ 30008766, 76LJ 30027293, and 76LJ 30030092. The proposed new well is in the NENWSW of section 18, township 29N, range 21W and will divert water at a rate of 250 GPM up to an annual volume of 120.5 AF. All wells are manifold into the same system and are completed in the same source. This flow rate and volume is included within the 11,994.0 GPM and 17,028.40 AF previously authorized by the aforementioned water rights for the City of Kalispell's public water supply system. The system is centrally controlled by a SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system allowing for the adjustment of the variable frequency drives powering the pumps in order to not exceed allotted pumping rates.

The requested change in POU will revise the water rights to be mostly consistent with the City's most recent water rights, 76LJ 30027293 and 76LJ 30030092. The new POU, however, will now exclude the area serviced by the Evergreen County Water and Sewer District. This change will allow the City to accommodate future growth, which is reflected in their 2007 Facility Plan Service Area. The POU is the corridor bordering the east and west side of US Highway 93 south of Kalispell to the intersection with US Highway 82. The northern boundary extends to Lost Creek Drive/Birch Grove Road. The western and eastern boundaries are generally limited by topographic features, including the mountains to the west and the Flathead River to the east.

6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)*

Montana Natural Resource Program Species of Concern
US Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands Mapper

Part II. Environmental Review

1. Environmental Impact Checklist:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION

Water quantity - *Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.*

Determination: The source is groundwater, therefore this is not applicable.

Water quality - *Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.*

Determination: The source is groundwater, therefore this is not applicable.

Groundwater - *Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

The Applicant proposes to divert water from ground water, by means of a 483-foot well, from January 1 through December 31 at a rate of 250 GPM up to 120.5 AF. The applicant determined a zone of approximately one-foot draw down at 5,540 ft. from the point of diversion by modeling a pumping rate of 250 GPM for a period of five years. The proposed change does not increase currently authorized flow rate or volume, therefore, this will not deplete ground or surface water sources.

Determination: No impact.

DIVERSION WORKS - *Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.*

The Applicant is requesting a new point of diversion using a well drilled by a licensed well driller (license # WWD-426) in accordance with MCA Title 37, Chapter 43 and ARM Title 36, Chapter 21. The well was completed in 2008 to a depth of 483 ft below ground surface, has a minimum casing diameter of 14 inches, has a static water level of 106 ft, and contains 0.10 inch perforations from 447 to 483 ft. The well contains a 40 horsepower (hp) Goulds 7 CLC submersible pump capable of supplying 250 GPM.

Determination: No impact.

UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Endangered and threatened species - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any “species of special concern,” or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or “species of special concern.”*

The Montana Natural Heritage Program website was referenced to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any “species of special concern” in vicinity of Township 29N and Range 21W, that could be impacted by the proposed project. The US Fish and Wildlife Service identified the threatened Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*). In addition the State of Montana, US Forest Service, and Bureau of Land Management identified the following species of special concern: Great Blue Heron (*Area herodias*); Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalis*); Westslope Cutthroat Trout (*Onchorhynchus clarkia lewisi*); Pygmy Whitefish (*Prosopium coulteri*); Maidenhair Spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*); Deer-Indian Paintbrush (*Castilleja cervina*); Short-styled Thistle (*Cirsium brevistylum*); Latah Tule Pea (*Lathyrus bijugatus*); and Aloina moss (*Aloina brevirostris*).

Determination: This proposed project is associated with the use of groundwater and therefore should not impact the above listed species.

Wetlands - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

Determination: The proposed place of use is not within the boundaries of wetlands mapped by the national wetlands inventory program.

Ponds - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

Determination: N/A

GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

Determination: No degradation of soils is expected.

VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

Determination: There will be no change in land-use characteristics associated with this application so there will be no significant impact.

AIR QUALITY - Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.

Determination: No impact.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES - Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Determination: Not applicable; project not located on State or Federal Lands.

DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY - Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.

Determination: None

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

Determination: The project is consistent with planned land use.

ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

Determination: There should be no significant impacts on recreational or wilderness activities from this proposed use.

HUMAN HEALTH - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

Determination: No impact.

PRIVATE PROPERTY - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes___ No X___ If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

Determination: No impact.

OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

Impacts on:

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? No
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? No
- (c) Existing land uses? No
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? No
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No
- (f) Demands for government services? No
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? No
- (h) Utilities? No
- (i) Transportation? No
- (j) Safety? No
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? No

2. *Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:*

Secondary Impacts: None

Cumulative Impacts: None

3. *Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:* None

4. *Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*

The “no action” alternative to this proposed project will result in the landowner not having access to water for domestic purposes.

PART III. Conclusion

1. *Preferred Alternative:* As proposed

2 *Comments and Responses:* None

3. Finding:

Yes___ No **X** Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: No significant impacts have been identified; therefore, no EIS is necessary.

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Tim Eichner

Title: Water Resources Specialist

Date: September 12, 2011